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ABSTRACT

Recent trends in television programming, in which women characters are portrayed more frequently than in the past in what had been traditionally male occupations, present new opportunities to examine the relationship of television use to the occupational desires of male and, particularly, female adolescents. A study examined this relationship in the context of social status constraints on the perceived opportunities of high school students. Subjects, 542 randomly chosen high school students in the Chicago suburbs, were given questionnaires on television viewing habits and perceptions. Findings indicated (1) that sex and social status interact to affect occupational desires, such that higher status females are more likely to desire traditionally male occupations than their lower status female counterparts; (2) identification with male and female characters in domestic and occupational roles still follows traditional lines overall, and adolescents are more likely to identify with characters if they perceive the shows to be more realistic; and (3) depictions of non-traditional female characters may be affecting the occupational desires of some lower status female adolescents who identify with television characters in occupational roles. This last finding supports a model that proposes that television portrayals of occupations will be more effective among those who have the least personal experience with these occupations. (Four tables of data are included, and 25 references are appended.) (MS)

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SEX AND SOCIAL STATUS: TELEVISION USE AND OCCUPATIONAL DESIRES AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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SEX AND SOCIAL STATUS: TELEVISION USE AND OCCUPATIONAL DESIRES AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Abstract

A sample survey of 542 high school students examined the relationship of sex, social status, and identification with television characters to the desired occupations of these adolescents. The study was conducted in the context of an increase in the proportion of female television characters being depicted in non-traditional occupational roles for women.

Findings indicate that sex and social status interact to affect occupational desires, such that higher status females desire occupations that are more traditionally male than do their lower status female counterparts. Identification with male and female characters in domestic and occupational roles still follows traditional lines overall, and adolescents are more likely to identify with characters if they perceive the shows to be more realistic.

Depictions of non-traditional female characters may be affecting the occupational desires of some lower status female adolescents who identify with television characters in occupational roles. This finding supports a model that proposes that television portrayals of occupations will be more effective among those who have the least personal experience with these occupations.

SEX AND SOCIAL STATUS: TELEVISION USE AND OCCUPATIONAL DESIRES AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Recent trends in television programming, in which women characters are portrayed more frequently than in the past in what had been traditionally male occupations (Williams et al., 1986; Jeffres, 1986; Calvert and Huston, 1987; Wroblewski and Huston, 1987), offer new opportunities to examine the relationship of television use to the occupational desires of male and particularly female adolescents.

Our study will examine this relationship in the context of social status constraints on the perceived opportunities of high school students. In this age group (14-18 years), adolescents are at the stage of crystallizing their vocational choices, employing various resources to explore their options, and becoming aware of constraints and opportunities that can affect their career choices (Super, 1953, 1984; Raskin, 1985). "During this period," Raskin (1985) observes, "...individuals should possess real information about the preferred occupation, be able to plan for entry into it, and make realistic assessments about the wisdom of this occupational choice." Structural constraints can affect both perceived opportunities and available information.

Social Class and Occupational Choice

In a review of research on social origins, mental abilities and aspirations, Danziger (1983) observes that social class has both direct and indirect effects on educational and occupational aspirations. Social class affects the ability, and to some extent the willingness, to pay for education. Based on work by Hyman (1965), Danziger notes that middle class parents value educational achievement in itself, and as a means toward occupational attainment. Lower class parents value education only as a means toward an occupation, and

generally see uncertain occupational returns. For high achievers, who perform well academically, this risk is relatively low, she says, and so academic performance can mitigate social class effects on aspirations.

Danziger further notes that socioeconomic status affects educational and occupational aspirations through direct, status-based effects on perceived opportunities, educational performance, mental abilities, and parental influences, and through indirect effects on the students' self-concepts of their own abilities. "It can be generalized from these continually refined models that people develop and adjust their aspirations in accord with the evaluation received from significant others -- teachers, peers, and (primarily) parents -- and with their assessment of their own ability, based on objective evidence of academic performance," she says.

Sex is also a social status characteristic, a number of authors (e.g., Yuchtman-Yaar and Shapira, 1981; Danziger, 1983; Geis et al., 1984) maintain, since the social ranking of females has traditionally been lower than that of males. Danziger (1983) proposes that being female should interact with social class origin to affect career aspirations, although academic achievement can also mitigate these effects. She observes that the higher the socioeconomic status of females, the more their aspirations resemble males'. Based on 1974 data, she found that high school girls' aspirations are affected more than boys' by parental attitudes and socioeconomic background. Girls of low social status, she concludes, might keep low aspirations if parents are reluctant or unable to support their plans.

Experiential exposure to potential occupations can also be a byproduct of social class. Although socialization to gender roles occurs throughout childhood and via various sources, parental modeling of occupational and domestic roles can be a significant influence on adolescents who are developing their adult expectations (Katz, 1987). It is likely that children of lower status

homes have less experience with nontraditional roles of males and particularly females than do children of higher status homes. Age might play a role, as Archer (1984) notes, because as individuals mature they generally have more opportunities to see males and females in non-traditional roles. Katz (1987) however notes that, although the mechanisms are not always clear, adolescents from lower socioeconomic levels tend to display more traditional gender stereotypes and behaviors than middle-class adolescents. This relationship between social class and gender stereotyping is actually more consistent among older children than among younger, she finds. Katz cautions that some of the status differences might be due to variables associated with social class, such as peer group influences, social networks, and the amount of television viewing.

Adolescents from lower social class backgrounds tend to watch more television than those from higher social strata, and also tend to perceive television as more real than do adolescents from higher income families (Faber et al, 1978). This would suggest that adolescents from lower social strata in particular may have additional exposure to occupational sex roles from television, and find them more believable.

Media and Occupational Stereotypes

By and large, past depictions of male and female roles on television would seem to reinforce the traditional stereotypes that lower social strata seem to hold. In a review of 185 content analytic studies, Signorelli (1985) found that male characters on television outnumbered female characters two or three to one, that females were cast in traditional roles, and were depicted as having limited employment possibilities. Some studies have found a relationship between career aspirations of children and adolescents and the kinds of television content to which they are exposed, in particular the kinds of sex-role stereotypes portrayed (e.g., Beuf, 1974; Jenning-Walstedt et al.,

1980). As of the mid-1980s, however, prime-time programs seemed to change their depictions of women such that more than half of the programs showed women in occupations, with about half of these depictions in non-traditional occupations and about half in traditional (Williams et al., 1986; Calvert and Huston, 1987). There is no similar attempt to show males in non-traditional roles (Williams et al., 1986), although one show depicts a butler and another a paid male housekeeper.

If lower status adolescents, especially females, are exposed to these non-traditional occupational roles, it might at least affect their awareness of other occupational opportunities, and possibly their occupational desires. Experimental evidence suggests that counter-stereotypical presentations can influence occupational aspirations of pre-teens (Williams et al., 1981; Johnston and Ettema, 1982). A recent survey of 65 fifth and sixth graders (Wroblewski and Huston, 1987), done in the context of the more recent television portrayals of female television characters in non-traditional as well as traditional occupational roles, found that television serves as a source of occupational information for these 10-13 year olds, and that girls expressed considerable interest in the non-traditional occupations portrayed. Boys, however, showed more traditional attitudes toward male occupations portrayed. The authors suggest that the results indicate that television can affect the "gender schemata" of early adolescents.

Media and Gender Schemata

Recent research into "gender schemata" (see Liben and Signorella, 1987) investigates the influence of experiences and communication, especially television sex-role portrayals, on these cognitive structures. Schemata represent organized knowledge held in long-term human memory about a given concept or type of stimulus (Fiske and Taylor, 1984). They are based on cumulative expe-

rience, and serve as learned expectations that guide perceptions and the processing and storage of information in memory (Bem, 1981). One influence schemata have on the processing of information is to allow generalizations to fill-in for specific examples (Calvert and Huston, 1987). Thus, television depictions of specific characters can be stored as general cases, representing broader types.

Real-life experiences are important sources of schemata that children bring to viewing television, since they help the child interpret the messages that they see (Calvert and Huston, 1987). Schemata can also be based on previously-stored information from television viewing, Wroblewski and Huston (1987) note, and are resistant to information that is not consistent with the schemata, although this information can be remembered if it is repeated often enough and viewers have time to note its inconsistency. Although children have schemata for both genders, that for their own gender is expected to be more elaborate. Given the value traditionally placed on the male role, girls would be expected to have more motivation to develop cross-sex schemata than would boys, Wroblewski and Huston (1987) note. Since children select programs and content, and develop schemata, "appropriate" to their genders (Calvert and Huston, 1987), identification with television characters should reflect sex-similarities primarily, although girls might be expected more than boys to identify with characters across sexes.

Research into sex-role development (e.g., Bandura, 1969) commonly attributes the adoption of sex-role responses to the modeling children do of others such as parents, peers, and characters that appear on television. In a review, Eisenstock (1984) notes that boys and girls tend to choose same-sex role models from those available to them, although girls are more likely than boys to identify with characters of the opposite sex. Other research modifies these findings by indicating that children may model behavior they see which

is appropriate for their own sex, regardless of whether the person performing the behavior is male or female, although this modeling is contingent upon an individual's psychological sex-role preference, Eisenstock notes. Her research found that feminine and androgynous children were more likely than masculine children, especially masculine boys, to identify with counter-stereotypical characters.

Status, Experience, and Media Effects

Social status differences in experiences with various occupations, especially in regard to non-traditional occupational roles for females, could mitigate media effects on occupational choice. Faber et al. (1978) propose that "a viewer who has had little personal experience with a range of occupations...may more readily accept the television portrayal of various occupations, while a viewer who has had personal experience with persons in the occupation will compare the television portrayal with his or her prior understanding of the occupation."

Faber et al. (1978) note that the realism of the televised portrayals will play a role in determining whether the adolescent considers the depiction relevant to his or her task of narrowing various occupational opportunities. Not all adolescents, they note, will attend to the same aspects of media content. Adolescents, they say, may also use television as another standard of comparison if the values of parents and peers are in conflict. Overall, however, television is likely to provide a wider range of occupational alternatives than adolescents will encounter in their daily lives.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Based on the literature we have reviewed, we hypothesize that:

> H1: Status and sex will interact such that higher status adolescent females will prefer occupations that are more non-traditional (i.e., more similar to those of males) than the occupations preferred by lower status adolescent females.

We have no specific hypotheses regarding the differences we might find in interpersonal discussions about careers that adolescents might have with parents, friends, teachers and guidance counselors. It is apparent that lower status girls would be able to pursue non-traditional careers only with parental support, which may translate into discussions with parents. Males and upper status females (who are more likely to pursue non-traditional occupations) may be more likely than lower status females to discuss future occupations with their fathers. Lower status females may seek out friends, teachers and guidance counselors instead. Since there is likely to be some conflict between parental norms and the recommendations of these other sources, television may be sought moreso by lower status females as another source of reality validation.

Given the results of past research, we would hypothesize that:

> H2a: Television exposure will be higher among lower status adolescents than among upper status adolescents.
>
> H2b: Lower status adolescents will be more likely to perceive the shows they watch as real than will higher status adolescents.

Since perceived reality should affect the adolescents' perceptions of the pertinence and usefulness of television presentations to their lives, it should affect the likelihood that they will identify with television characters. Therefore:

> H3: There will be a positive relationship between the perceived reality of television shows that adolescents watch and the likelihood that they will identify with characters on those shows.

Given the findings of research into gender schemata and television character role modeling, we expect that:

> H4a: Males will tend to identify with male characters in occupational (rather than domestic) roles.
>
> H4b: Upper status females will identify with female characters in occupational roles more than with female characters in domestic roles.
>
> H4c: Lower status females will identify with female characters in domestic roles more than with female characters in occupational roles.
>
> H4d: Females will be more likely to identify with characters of the opposite sex than will males.

Given the importance of academic success to the career plans of females, we hypothesize:

> H5: There will be a correlation between high school grade point average and the likelihood that females will want to pursue non-traditional female careers.

This model would suggest, based on the literature we reviewed, that lower status females would be most likely to be affected by television portrayals of non-traditional female roles. As compared to males and even females of higher status, lower status females are likely to have the least exposure through experience to non-traditional female occupations. They are likely to be among those who are more exposed to television and its portrayals, and to perceive television as more real. The occupational characteristics of any characters they identify with on television are likely to be salient features to them, whereas others (i.e., higher status females, lower and higher status males) who face fewer experiential constraints on occupational choice will likely not pay as much attention to occupational features of televised role models. Thus, we would hypothesize that:

> H6: There will be a correlation between the non-traditionality of the occupation of television characters identified with and the non-traditionality of occupational desires among lower status female adolescents.

We do not expect a similar relationship to appear among higher status females, or among higher or lower status males.

METHOD

A sample survey of 542 public high school students in the Chicago suburbs was conducted in the spring of 1988. This study was part of a larger survey of communication and choice of colleges and occupations conducted in the suburban Chicago area. The questionnaires were administered to classes chosen randomly from among eight Chicago suburban public high schools, which were also chosen at random. The high schools were weighted by enrollment in the random selection, and included high schools in the more affluent suburbs as well as those in areas of lower-middle income, which were also more racially mixed. All students were assured of confidentiality.

Measurement

Each student indicated his or her preferred occupation in an open-ended question that asked "What would you like your occupation to be 20 years from now?" Responses were coded along two dimensions: the Duncan (1961) socioeconomic status scale, and the proportion of those in that occupation who are females, according to the 1980 census. Responses of "homemaker" or equivalent were coded as 99% female. Each student was also asked in an open-ended question to indicate the occupation of father and of mother. These responses were also each coded according to social status and proportion female. Non-responses and "don't know" answers were recorded as missing data throughout.

Students also indicated in two closed-ended questions the highest level of education completed by each parent. These scores were combined into a measure of average parental education. An index of social status was derived by combining the standardized scores of average parental education and parental occupational status (father's occupational status or mother's occupational

status, whichever is higher). The status measure was broken at the median into "higher" and "lower" status. This status differential, of course, is relative to suburban Chicago. Students also indicated their sex, high school grade point average, and the amount of education they plan to complete (2 some high school, 3 finish high school, 4 trade school, 5 some college or junior college, 6 college degree, 7 graduate or professional degree).

Interpersonal communication about their career choice was measured by closed-ended questions that asked how often (3 frequently, 2 sometimes, 1 rarely, 0 never) they talk about what they want their adult occupation to be with each of the following: father, mother, friends, teachers, and guidance counselors.

Television exposure was measured by the number of hours the student said he or she watches television between 4 p.m. and midnight on weekdays.

To measure identification with television characters, students were given a list of 38 male and female main characters from 18 prime-time television shows on the air in Spring 1988. The characters were divided by the shows upon which they appear. Students were asked first to check-mark only the shows they watch regularly. Afterward they were told to "take a look at the characters listed under the shows you watch. Are there any that you would very much like to be like in the future?" If so, they were to check-mark the character. They were told that they could name as many or as few (or even none) as they need.

Among the characters were 10 male characters shown primarily in occupational roles (e.g., Spenser in "Spenser for Hire," Dr. Craig in "St. Elsewhere"), 11 female characters shown primarily in occupational roles (e.g., Grace Van Owen in "L.A. Law," Chris Cagney in "Cagney and Lacey"), 8 male characters shown primarily in domestic (i.e., around the home) roles (e.g., Joey in "My Two Dads," Steven Keaton in "Family Ties"), and 9 female charac-

ters shown primarily in domestic roles (e.g., Claire Huxtable in "The Cosby Show," Elise Keaton in "Family Ties"). Characters were judged to be in occupational roles if the show primarily depicted the character doing his or her job. Domestic roles showed the character primarily in non-job-related domestic situations, even if the character was presented as having an outside job. Characters were chosen for presentation after a pretest at another high school in the Milwaukee area the previous Fall. In the pretest, students were asked which of a larger set of characters they identify with, and could nominate other characters in an open-ended measure. Selection of characters for the identification measure was based on the pretest nominations.

A measure of the sex-role traditionality of each job portrayed by a character in an occupational role was derived by using 1980 census data to rate each job according to the percentage of real-world job holders who are female in that occupation.

The average sex-role traditionality (% female) of the female occupational characters with which a student identifies was then calculated by averaging the traditionality scores for these student-selected characters. The same was done in regard to the male characters with which each student identifies. (Both scales are calibrated as % female.) The measures apply only to those students who name at least one occupational character of a given type (male or female). The range of traditionality for the female characters went from occupations that are 8% female to those that are 96% female, with the average 34% female. For male characters, occupations ranged from those that are 14% female to 96% female, with the average 35% female.

Students were also asked to rate each show they watch according to how "real" the show seems to them, "in other words, how much does the show represent the way things are in everyday life?" The responses were very real (2), somewhat real (1), or not very real (0).

Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to analyze the data. Two-way analysis of variance was used to test the relationships of social status and sex of the student to the mean levels of the various communication, occupational and background variables of interest. Partial correlation, with control for grade point average and age, was used within each of four groups (male and female low and high status) to ascertain the relationship of traditionality of parental occupations and identification with television characters to the sex-role traditionality of the occupation to which the student aspires. Grade point average was used as a control because of its expected relationship to desired occupations. Age was used because of the experiential and developmental processes it represents.

RESULTS

Some sex and social status constraints on expectations and opportunities are apparent in Table 1. Lower status students have lower grade point averages than their higher status peers, and plan less further education, no doubt due to a combination of academic and economic considerations. Concomitantly, higher status students aspire to somewhat higher status occupations than do their lower status counterparts. It is noteworthy that the average GPA of girls is somewhat higher than for boys. Perhaps girls feel the need to work harder academically to compete professionally with boys.

Traditionality (% female) of the father's occupation is about as expected and equivalent across groups. Lower status mothers tend to be in more traditionally female roles, which likely limits the experiences boys and girls from lower status homes have with females in non-traditional occupational roles.

The career aspirations of boys are, as might be expected, toward jobs which are about as traditionally male as are their fathers', and more traditionally male than the careers that the girls, on the average, aspire to. The hypothesized (H1) interaction of status and sex ($p=.002$) indicates that higher status girls desire careers that are comparatively less traditional for females than the careers desired by their lower status counterparts. This would be in line with the grade point average and educational plans of higher status females, and the observation that higher status females desire careers more in line with those of males. On the average, higher status girls aspire to careers where males are currently the majority. However, it appears that girls are aspiring on the average toward roles that are less traditionally female than those of their mothers [$t(90)=6.54$, $p<.001$ for lower status girls; $t(106)=9.16$, $p<.001$ for higher status girls].

Interpersonal discussions about future careers are to some extent patterned along the lines of the sex of the student and the social status of the family. Boys are more likely to talk with their fathers about future careers than are girls, although sex makes no difference in the extent to which boys or girls talk with their mothers about this topic. Lower status boys and girls talk somewhat less with their fathers about their future occupations than do their higher status counterparts. The net result is that lower status girls are the least likely to discuss their future careers with their fathers.

It appears that discussions with friends may supplant discussions with fathers among some of the groups, as girls are slightly more likely to talk with their friends about their careers than are boys, and lower status students are more likely than higher status to discuss their future careers with their friends. Lower status girls in particular may be seeking information about nontraditional careers from friends, as this information, support and experience (via parents) may be relatively lacking at home. Although it might be expected that teachers and guidance counselors might take on added importance as career information sources under these circumstances, it does not appear that students in any of the groups talk more frequently with teachers and counselors. In fact, across the board, career related discussions with these sources are relatively infrequent.

In regard to television use (Table 2), there are no significant differences across groups in the amount of weekday evening television exposure, or in the perceived reality of the shows they watch. Thus, there is no support for H2a or H2b. In regard to H3, as hypothesized, the perceived realism of the shows the adolescents watch has a small but statistically significant relationship with the overall number of television characters they identify with, with control for hours of television exposure, sex, status, age, and GPA (partial $r=.16$, $p<.001$, $df=410$).

In regard to H4a through H4d, there are marked differences across sex in the types of characters the students identify with. (There are no differences by status.) Traditional distinctions are apparent. Generally, girls tend to identify with female characters and boys with male characters. Boys are more likely to identify with male characters in occupational roles than in domestic roles [$t(114)=4.55$, $p<.001$ for low status boys; $t(109)=4.42$, $p<.001$ for high status], and girls are are more likely to identify with female characters in domestic roles than in occupational roles [$t(119)=6.04$, $p<.001$ for low status

girls; $t(132)=5.34$, $p<.001$ for high status]. Girls on the average identify with more characters of the opposite sex (1.1 male characters) than do boys (.6 female characters) [$t(534)=3.10$, $p<.01$]. Occupational or domestic role of the opposite-sex character makes no difference in this type of identification. Thus, all hypotheses in this set except H4b are supported.

Taking into account the traditionality (% female) of the job role of the occupational characters with which students identify does reveal some patterns. Among those who identify with male characters, girls are more likely to identify with male characters in somewhat less traditionally male roles, while boys tend to identify with characters in more traditionally male roles. Higher status girls who identify with female occupational characters tend to choose those in highly nontraditional roles for women (in occupations that, on the average, are only 15.3% female). Lower status girls who identify with female characters tend to identify with those in roles that are not quite as non-traditional (30.4% female) on the average. Relatively few boys, as noted, identify with female characters, and so interpretation must be tempered with the realization that the subsample size (16 of 115 lower status males, 21 of 110 higher status males) is relatively small. Among this group, lower status males who identify with female occupational characters tend to identify with those in more traditionally male occupations. Cross-sex identifications in particular may be reflecting a tendency of some to identify with behavior which is consistent for their own gender, regardless of the sex of the character, as noted by Eisenstock (1984).

In regard to H5, academic success (in terms of grade point average) relates to the traditionality of desired careers among girls, but not among boys (Table 3). Among both lower and higher status girls, higher grade point averages correlate with desires to go into non-traditional occupations for women. Thus, academic success does seem to mitigate occupational desires for females.

It is less relevant for males, who face fewer occupational constraints. Men appear to have more opportunities for occupational success not dependent on educational success (Danziger, 1983).

Among lower status girls, there is a relationship between discussing future careers with their fathers and the desire to go into less traditional occupations for females. This may indicate that parental support, in particular the support of father, is an important factor in whether lower status girls pursue non-traditional occupations. Among lower status boys, discussing future careers with teachers relates to some desire on the part of these boys to go into somewhat less traditional male occupations. It is noteworthy that these two relationships occur among lower status students, whose exposure to career options through experiences is likely more constrained than it is for higher status students.

Among higher status girls, there is a correlation between the traditionality of their mothers' roles and the traditionality of their own desired occupations. Thus, their experiences, especially in regard to what they are exposed to at home, seem to have some influence on their own occupational desires. As expected, there are no relationships between character identification and their occupational desires (Table 4). The attributes of characters that they do identify with, even occupational females, are likely not job-related attributes.

Among lower status females (Table 3), however, there is no relationship between parental occupational roles and their daughters' career desires. Constraints may be limiting the extent to which girls in these households are exposed to a variety of alternative career roles. Since their experience is relatively limited, career-related attributes of the female occupational characters with which some identify may be more influential in defining their career options.

As hypothesized (H6), among females in lower status homes, there is a relationship between the traditionality of the occupation of female characters they identify with and the traditionality of their own occupational desires (partial $r=.35$, $p<.01$, $df=39$, in Table 4).

Among higher status males, there are no significant relationships between the traditionality of their career choices and any of the variables tested: GPA, age, parental occupations, discussions about careers (in Table 3) and character identification (in Table 4). It is likely that upper status males, who are developing their career options under relatively few constraints, have a variety of experiences and options open, and so are not much influenced by parental roles, academic considerations, or television character identification. Among lower status males, those with mothers in more traditional female roles are more likely to desire traditionally male occupations for themselves. While the reason for this is not clear, it is possible that the gender schemata of the male adolescent are being partially defined by whether or not the mother's occupational role is relatively traditional. (There are too few cases of cross-sex television character identification by males to do any analysis of relationships between the traditionality of female characters identified with and traditionality of desired occupations among males.)

CONCLUSION

Interpretations from these data must be tempered by the fact that the survey is cross-sectional. Therefore, causal patterns cannot truly be established. However, the following are some general interpretations that summarize the results:

Sex and social status differences in the processes that relate to occupational choice were very apparent in this study. Had the survey been able to include high schools in the city of Chicago, it is likely that status differences would have been even more profound. Expected relationships between social strata and two of the media variables, television exposure and perceived reality of shows, may have developed under these circumstances. Nonetheless, some relationships of social status to communication uses and, possibly, effects were disclosed.

The identification that male and female adolescents made with characters formed a traditional pattern. Girls, in addition, were more likely than boys to identify with characters of the opposite sex. This may be owed to the relative status given males in this culture. These students were more likely to identify with characters if they perceived the shows they watched to be more real.

The research also confirmed an interaction between status and sex, such that higher status females are more likely to desire occupations more on a par with males', as compared to lower status females. Regardless of social status, the high school girls in the survey tend on the average to desire occupations less traditional for females than the occupations of their mothers. Upper status high school students, girls in particular, seem already to be planning, on the average, some post-baccalaureate schooling.

It appears that the recent trends in television programming, in which more female characters are depicted in non-traditional occupations, could be affecting the occupational desires of some lower status adolescent girls, who otherwise would choose more traditional roles. For these young women to bring their career goals to fruition, however, also seems to require academic success as well as parental support. From the standpoint of communication theory, it seems that media depictions may affect the occupation-related

gender schemata of some adolescents if these teens have relatively little experience with the occupations depicted.

From the measurement standpoint, the use of census data to determine the proportion of various occupations staffed by females seems to be a useful measure of traditionality.

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Table 1

Education, Occupation and Communication Variables
By Sex and Social Status
(Two-Way Analyses of Variance)

	Females		Males		Significance:		
Variables:	Lower Status	Higher Status	Lower Status	Higher Status	Main Effects Status	Sex	Interaction
GPA	2.6	2.9	2.4	2.8	.001	.023	
Education Planned	5.7	6.4	5.6	6.1	.001		
Status (Duncan) of Own Preferred Occupation:	67.0	71.5	59.4	67.6	.001		
% Females In: Parental Occupation:							
Father	26.1	26.8	23.2	27.9			
Mother	75.3	72.8	79.8	68.5	.014		
Own Preferred Occupation:	52.3	41.9	21.1	24.9		.001	.002
Career Discussions With:							
Father	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.3	.024	.002	
Mother	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.2			
Friends	2.4	2.2	2.3	2.1	.011	.031	
Teachers	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1			
Counselors	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.2			
N=	(120)	(133)	(115)	(110)			

Table 2

Television Use and Character Identification
By Sex and Social Status
(Two-Way Analyses of Variance)

	Females		Males		Significance:		
Variables:	Lower Status	Higher Status	Lower Status	Higher Status	Main Effects Status	Sex	Interaction
Evening TV Viewing Hours	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.7			
TV Realism	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0			
TV Characters Identified With:							
Male							
Occupational	0.6	0.6	1.6	1.6		.001	
Domestic	0.5	0.4	1.0	1.0		.001	
Female							
Occupational	0.7	0.8	0.2	0.3		.001	
Domestic	1.5	1.5	0.2	0.3		.001	
N-	(120)	(133)	(115)	(110)			
% Female of Occupations of Occupational Characters Identified With:							
Male	57.0	49.9	46.1	41.4		.01	
n-	(36)	(37)	(64)	(65)			
Female	30.4	15.3	21.2	35.3			.004
n-	(53)	(66)	(16)	(21)			

Table 3

Relationship
of Age, GPA, Parental Occupation,
and Interpersonal Discussions About Career
with Preferred Occupation (% Female)

Partial Correlation Coefficients
(Degrees of Freedom)

	Females		Males	
Variables	Lower Status	Higher Status	Lower Status	Higher Status
Control:				
GPA	-.25***	-.28***	-.17	.14
	(101)	(107)	(81)	(87)
Age	.04	.10	-.04	.08
	(101)	(107)	(81)	(87)
Frequency of Discussions About Career With:				
Father	-.21*	-.01	.00	.01
Mother	-.02	.14	.09	-.04
Friends	-.10	-.09	.07	-.14
Teachers	.10	-.14	.21*	-.15
Counselors	.06	.06	-.08	.05
	(96)	(105)	(79)	(83)
% Female in Occupation of:				
Mother	.08	.23**	-.26**	-.14
	(86)	(101)	(72)	(79)
Father	.06	.12	-.03	.11
	(90)	(100)	(73)	(84)

NOTE: Partial correlations controlled by control variables of GPA and age. Relationship of each control variable is controlled by the other control variable.

Significance Key: *** p=.001
** p=.01
* p=.05

Table 4

Relationship
of TV Character Identification Variables
with Preferred Occupation (% Female)

Partial Correlation Coefficients
(Degrees of Freedom)

	Females		Males	
Variables	Lower Status	Higher Status	Lower Status	Higher Status
Television Characters Identified With:				
Male				
Occupational	.11	-.09	-.03	.04
Domestic	-.07	-.14	-.11	.09
Female				
Occupational	.11	-.13	-.08	.07
Domestic	.05	.09	.00	.04
	(100)	(106)	(80)	(86)
% Female of Occupations of Occupational Characters Identified With:				
Female	.35**	-.07	.56*	.02
	(39)	(52)	(10)	(16)
Male	.02	.13	-.16	-.21
	(27)	(28)	(47)	(50)

NOTE: Partial correlations controlled by control variables of GPA and age.

Significance Key: *** p=.001
** p=.01
* p=.05